

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 SAM-01 INR-07

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DRAFTED BY ARA:NC:FJDEVINE

APPROVED BY D - RWDUEMLING

ARA - MR. LUERS

S/S - MR. MOFFAT

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 115996

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, VE

SUBJECT: BILATERAL MEETING OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY WITH
FOREIGN MINISTER OF VENEZUELA

1. FOREIGN MINISTER ESCOVAR AND AMBASSADOR BURELLI WERE
RECEIVED BY THE DEPUTY SECRETARY ON MAY 16.
2. AMONG SUBSTANTIVE TOPICS COVERED, BOTH AGREED AS TO
DESIRABILITY OF STRENGTHENED BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP, WITH
FONMIN SEEING THIS AS MEANS OF LAYING GROUNDWORK FOR
CONCRETE ACHIEVEMENT DURING COURSE OF FUTURE VISIT TO
VENEZUELA BY THE SECRETARY. HE SAID THAT SOON AFTER HIS
MAY 20 RETURN TO CARACAS HE WOULD BE SEEING AMBASSADOR
SHLAUDEMAN TO ARRANGE FOR A SMALL GROUP REPRESENTING GOV
AND EMBASSY CARACAS TO WORK OUT FORM AND CHARACTER OF
FUTURE BILATERAL DEALINGS.
3. REGARDING CUBA, FOREIGN MINISTER EMPHASIZED IMPORTANCE
OF HAVING SOME TARGET DATE FOR DISPOSING OF CUBAN PROBLEM
AND OPENING THE WAY FOR CONCENTRATION ON OTHER ASPECTS OF
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INTER-AMERICAN COOPERATION.

4. ESCOVAR SUGGESTED PROGRESS ON PANAMA CANAL EASIER

BECAUSE CANAL NOW LESS IMPORTANT THAN PREVIOUSLY TO USG.
DEPUTY SECRETARY DISAGREED WITH THIS VIEW, EXPLAINED SOME
OF INTERNAL USG PROBLEMS COMPLICATING THIS MATTER, BUT
EXPRESSED BELIEF REASONABLE SOLUTION IS POSSIBLE.

5. DEPUTY SECRETARY REFERRED TO USG READINESS EXAMINE
NEW WAYS MOVING AHEAD ON COMMODITY ISSUES, AND FOREIGN
MINISTER ESCOVAR SAID SECRETARY'S KANSAS CITY SPEECH NOW
BEING ANALYZED IN CARACAS AND VENEZUELAN COMMENT WOULD BE
PROVIDED TO AMBASSADOR SHLAUDEMAN.

6. ON SUBJECT OF GULF BRIBERY SCANDAL, DEPUTY SECRETARY
SAID HE ASSUMED DORSEY LETTER HAD SATISFACTORILY CORRECTED
ANY ERRONEOUS PRESUMPTION OF VENEZUELAN INVOLVEMENT.
AFTER NOTING THAT DORSEY THAT SAME DAY, IN TESTIFYING
BEFORE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE, HAD IDENTIFIED SOUTH KOREA
AS COUNTRY IN QUESTION, DEPUTY SECRETARY ADDED THAT
AMBASSADOR SHLAUDEMAN WOULD BE ASKED TO RESPOND TO NOTE
WE RECEIVED ON THIS SUBJECT FROM GOV IN ORDER TO CLARIFY
THE RECORD.

7. FOREIGN MINISTER ESCOVAR EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR
CONTACTS WITH DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL AND SAID HE HAD BEEN
VERY WELL ATTENDED EVER SINCE ARRIVAL. WITH REGARD
US-VENEZUELA RELATIONS IN GENERAL, HE URGED THAT FRANK
PUBLIC STATEMENTS NOT BE MISINTERPRETED AS QUOTE HOSTILITY
UNQUOTE AND SAID THAT AS HE HAD MENTIONED TO THE SECRETARY,
VENEZUELA IS IN POSITION PROVIDE QUOTE BRIDGES UNQUOTE
FOR US TO LATIN AMERICA AND THIRD WORLD.

8. MEMCON FOLLOWS. INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 26 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, FOREIGN RELATIONS, MEETING AGENDA, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE115996
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: ARA:NC:FJDEVINE
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D750175-0777
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t197505102/baaaajzz.tel
Line Count: 88
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 SEP 2003 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <30 OCT 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> jms 971015
Subject: n/a
TAGS: PFOR, CU, VE, (BURELLI), (ESCOVAR SALOM, RAMON)
To: CARACAS
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006